



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

January 11, 2006

News Release

FOUR DALLAS-AREA RESIDENTS SENTENCED FOR THEIR ROLE IN FRAUDULENT IDENTIFICATION DOCUMENT SCHEME

DALLAS — The admitted ringleader of a Dallas fraudulent document scheme was sentenced in federal court here today to up to 60 months in prison and \$167,050 restitution to the victims. Today's sentence was announced by U.S. Attorney Richard B. Roper, Northern District of Texas, and the case was investigated by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

Esmeralda Vidal, aka Esmeralda Cavello, aka Maria Guadalupe Luna, aka Lupe Luna, aka Lupe, had pleaded guilty in July to one count of conspiracy to transfer false identification documents, and two counts of transferring false identification documents. U.S. District Judge Barbara M.G. Lynn sentenced Vidal to 60 months imprisonment. She was also ordered to pay \$167,050 in restitution to the victims, with liability for such restitution against all defendants. Judge Lynn also ordered that Vidal surrender to the Bureau of Prisons Jan. 24; she is on electronic monitoring until that date.

Three other Dallas-area residents, who had also pleaded guilty to the fraudulent document scheme, were also sentenced today by Judge Lynn.

Co-defendants Emily Young, Jackie Cavello Rodriguez, and Robertine Gonzales, aka Tina, each pleaded guilty this summer to one count of conspiracy to transfer false identification documents. Emily Young, already in custody, was sentenced to 18 months imprisonment. Jackie Cavello Rodriguez was sentenced to 24 months imprisonment; and Robertine Gonzales was sentenced 15 months imprisonment. Ms. Rodriguez must surrender to the Bureau of Prisons Jan. 24, and Ms. Gonzales on Feb. 28.

Co-defendant John Gilbert Cavello has also pleaded guilty to one count of possession of a false identification document and will be sentenced April 12.

Vidal and the others conspired to transfer false identification documents, including birth certificates and Social Security cards, to illegal aliens and others for their use and the use of their family members and friends who were illegal aliens. These users desired the identification documents to facilitate their ability to gain employment, and to travel within and outside the United States. The conspiracy to transfer false identification documents was directed in large part by Vidal, who along with Rodriguez, Young, and others, solicited potential buyers directly or by word of mouth. They were also assisted in the conspiracy, in various ways, by co-defendants Emily Young and Robertine Gonzales.

Rodriguez is Vidal's daughter, and Gonzales is Vidal's sister. Potential buyers of the identification documents were promised authentic identification documents and were typically required to pay in advance of receipt of the documents. In many instances, moneys were paid but no documents were actually delivered. Those that were delivered were false.

From about Nov. 15, 2004 to March 2, 2005, on one or more occasions, Vidal, along with Young, Gonzales and Rodriguez, provided several individuals with fraudulent Social Security letters indicating the agency's receipt of the individual's application for a Social Security card, and the fact that the individual would receive his/her card shortly. Vidal, either directly or through Rodriguez and Gonzales, among others, received several thousand dollars in cash from various persons for Social Security cards and/or birth certificates.

U.S. Attorney Roper praised the investigative efforts of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Sarah Saldaña.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.